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SAKAMOTO, Atsushi. Aodo Denzen's Reception of European Graphic Art

This article aims to identify European prints and illustrated books studied by Aodo Denzen (1748–1822), an artist of the late Edo period, and to specify Denzen's methods and characteristics of imitation and invention by comparing the models with Denzen's etchings and drawings. Japan continued to reject trading with European countries except the Netherlands, and this article hopes to contribute to knowledge of what kind of prints and books may have been imported from the Netherlands to Japan during that period.

Nagata Zenkichi, known as Aodo Denzen, was born in Sukagawa City, Fukushima Prefecture. Based on contemporary and subsequent historical records, Denzen trained as a painter with his brother Jokichi, the monk-painter Gessen, and Tani Buncho. He was ordered by Matsudaira Sadanobu (1787–1793), the lord of Shirakawa (1783–1812) and chief senior councilor of the Tokugawa shogunate, to acquire skills in etchings brought from Europe. Denzen probably saw and tried to imitate European prints and illustrated books while he was learning etching techniques under Matsudaira. Studies on identifying iconographical sources have been carried out before (Okamura 1953; Kagesato 1973; Isozaki 1980; Sugano 1984; Katsumori 2011); the researchers other than Kagesato and Isozaki tended to investigate materials conserved in Japan, but enormous numbers of records and images contemporary with Denzen's activities were subsequently lost or are currently unknown, and it is therefore necessary to expand the objects of the investigation.

This article will discuss the etchings and illustrated books conserved abroad and highlight the *Second Image of the Platform for the Fireworks Commemorating the Treaty of Nystad*, *Marie Louise d'Orléans* published by Nicolaas Visscher, and three illustrations (*Castellum de Duffel*, *Castellum de Anderstadt*, and *Castellum de Hoochstraten*) that were repeatedly inserted in books of the geographical history of Brabant written by the Belgian Jacques Le Roy as models of Denzen's two drawings and seven etchings. These: were preparatory drawing for *Folding-Screen Painting of Mount Asama*, *Susakihenten*, *The Spanish Queen Receiving Columbus*, *Marie Louise* (drawing and etching), *Western Landscape with Port*, *Western Landscape with Street*, and *Western Sailing Ship*.

Concerning Denzen's method of copying European prints, we can suppose that Denzen traced with a paintbrush, laying a sheet of thin paper on top of the models and moving the sheet in the middle of the copying process. As a result, the lines drawn by Denzen correspond almost exactly with those of the models in detail, though discrepancies can be found. It is possible that these differences were not simple errors but Denzen's inventions. He also selected, combined, inverted, and enlarged models to demonstrate his originality.

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